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February 8, 2023

***Testimony of Rep. Anne Graham in support of
LD 258, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund
and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain
Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the
Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025, Part I
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs***

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs and my esteemed colleagues of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is Anne Graham and I represent the communities of Gray and North Yarmouth, House District 105. I am here to testify in support of clarifying language on LD 1: 5721-A. Limitation on municipal property tax levy. This is in reference to Part "I" which updates statutes relevant to the General Fund appropriations limit. Repeal of the law can be considered at the discretion of this honorable committee.

POSTED ON: MAY 31, 2022 - 9:09AM Town of Gray website

LD1 is a state law that attempts to limit the growth of Town budgets by requiring a vote if the property tax levy limit, which is determined by the LD1 formula, is exceeded. Because of this formula, voters will need to approve the new Town budget figure in Article 3 as well as an override (increase) of the LD1 limit in Article 10 for the Town budget to pass. Article 10 on the ballot asks voters to increase this limit from \$4,645,213 to \$5,655,301.

In the past two fiscal years, the State has gone from giving towns three percent in revenue sharing to five percent, and this has a direct impact on the LD1 formula (see the next question). The increased State revenue changed Gray's LD1 formulation enough to warrant an override.

As one of the town of Gray's two state representatives, I understand that this law has caused confusion among voters and created an undue burden for the work of Gray's town government and other communities around the state. I also represent North Yarmouth where we enjoy the town meeting format where confusion can sometimes reign. The LD 1 override law language sows even more confusion. As a former select board member, I can say that we were usually able

to explain LD 1 with the 50 to 100 residents who showed up on a Spring Saturday morning. Gray doesn't have that option.

In my humble opinion, it comes down to keeping things simple. It is important that our community members understand what they are voting on. I look to DAFS and AFA to craft this language that will do that on LD 1 override language.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to our work together in the 131st session and beyond.